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Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

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BERKELEY CA

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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY RAILROAD CLUB is now barreling along. For info, write to THE TWENTIETH CENTURY RAILROAD CLUB, 10700 Seeley Ave., Chicago, IL 60643, with SASE.

DELAWARE VALLEY readers: Join the new Delaware Valley Citizens Committee for Better Transportation (DELTRAN). 1972 dues: individual, $2; organization, $7.50 (under 100 members) and $15 (100 members or more). Newsletter subscription, $1; sample free on request. DELTRAN, PO Box 429, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

AMTRAK, EURAILPASS, CRUISE SHIPS, AIRLINES--travel in comfort with the time-saving aid of an experienced travel consultant and agent. It costs you no extra for this convenience, since our fee comes out of the normal ticket price--the same price you'd pay without our services. Contact Jean Maxwell, 1322 Shattuck, Berkeley, CA 94709. Phone (415) 549-0360.

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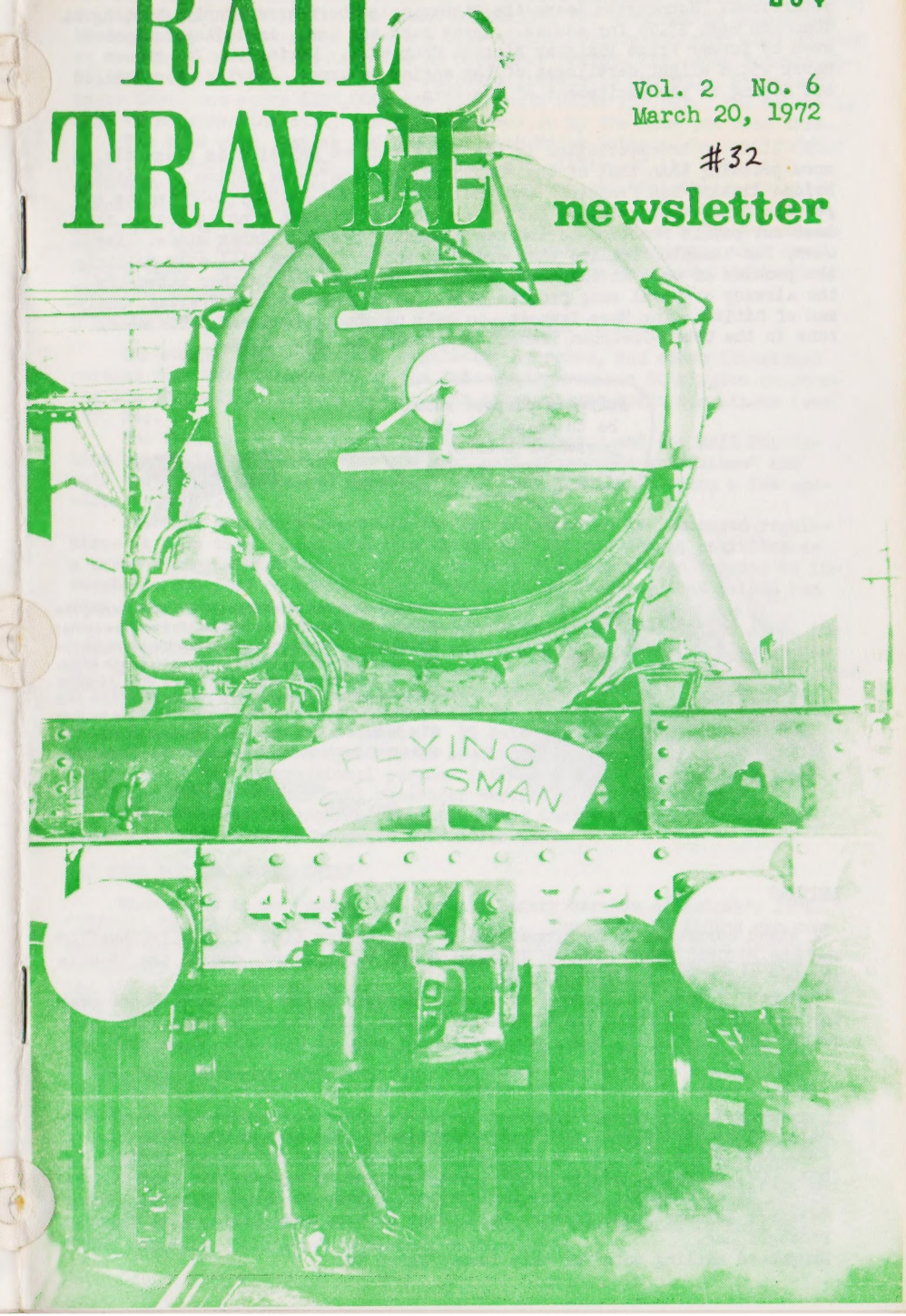
RAIL TRAVEL newsletter

25¢

Vol. 2 No. 6
March 20, 1972
#32



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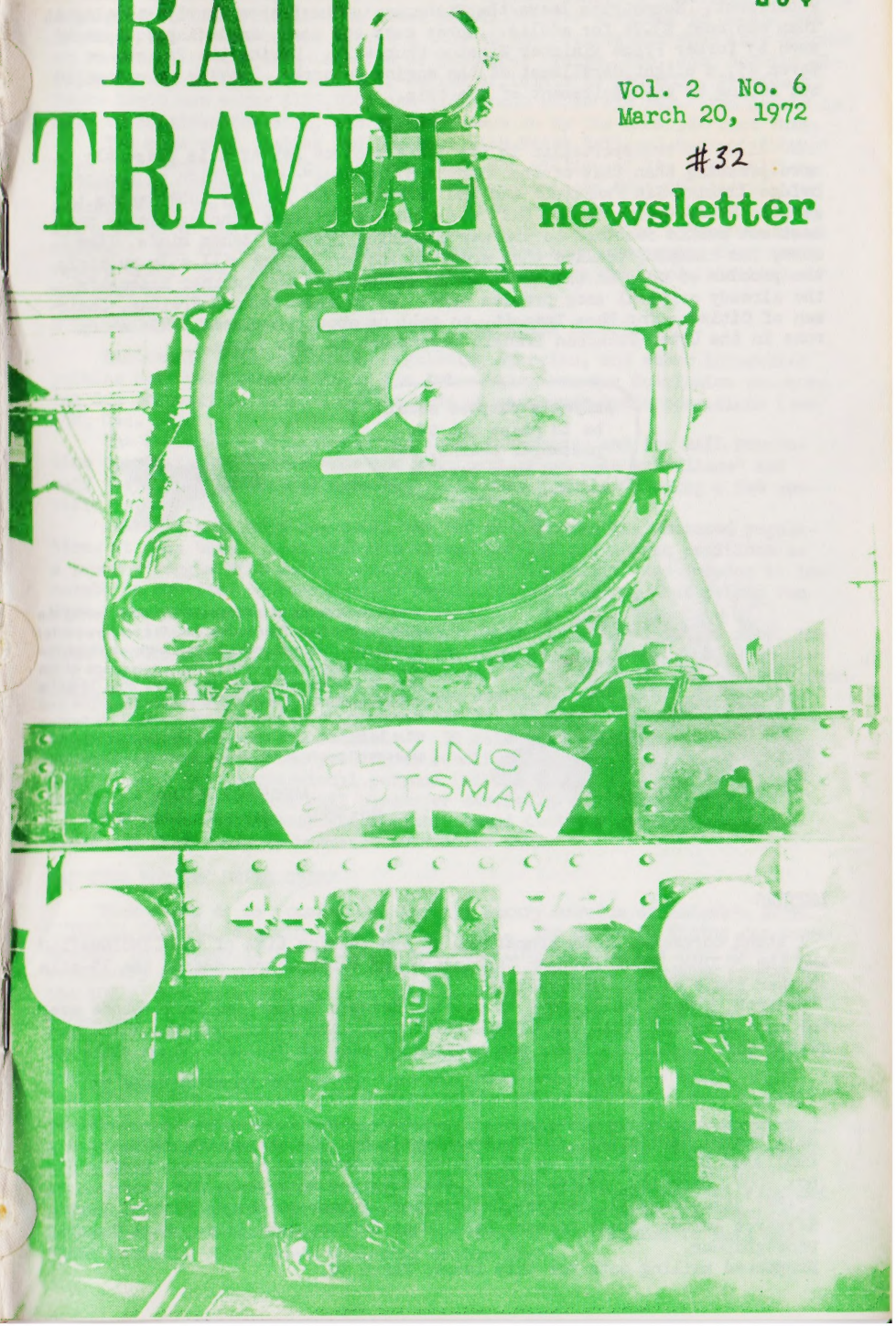

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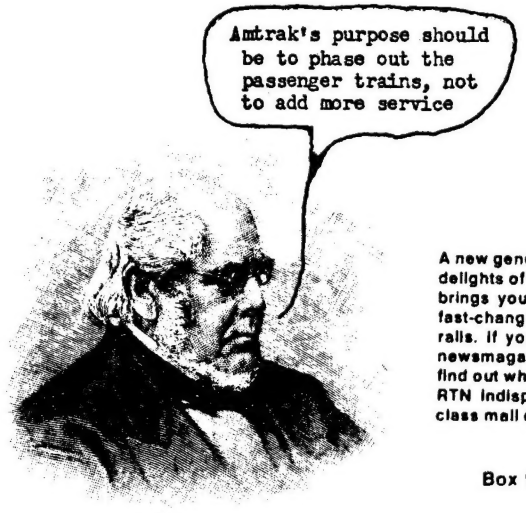

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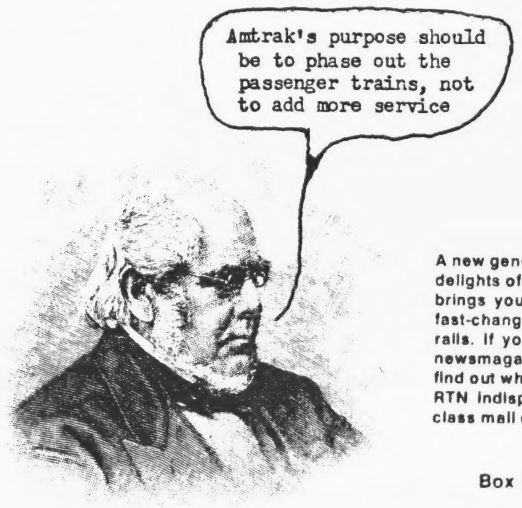

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QUOTES OF THE WEEK ***

"We had to adjust to fewer passengers, and this led some to believe we were being unfriendly."

—SP official quoted by S.F. Examiner, Mar. 26

"The Southern Pacific is the least cooperative among all the rail companies we deal with. They have dragged their feet every step. They have a generation of personnel with ingrained negative attitudes toward passengers."

—Amtrak official quoted by S.F. Examiner, Mar. 26

"We ought to get out of this program just as we got out of the SST before the taxpayers of this nation are railroaded into the poorhouse."

—Rep. H.R. Gross (R-Iowa), at Amtrak hearings

"Nationalization of our passenger trains is not the issue. That already has taken place. We'll see more of it. What is the issue is whether we'll revive enjoyable intercity passenger travel on trains, or forever scrap the idea. That will be up to Congress, which means that will be up to you."

—Financial columnist Sylvia Porter, Mar. 24

Mixed Train of Thoughts

AUTO-TRAIN got about a million dollars in free publicity in a beautiful 4-page color article in Life Magazine March 24. Editor Mary Leatherbee rode the train, and her only negative report was an over-hour-late arrival. The article, incidentally, also called Amtrak trains "mostly empty"..... "SAN MIGUEL"—Santa Fe baggage-dorm car, went on the CITY OF SF March 25..... LAS VEGAS FUN TRAIN took one lounge off SAN DIEGANS, which was replaced by Burlington car "Silver Buffet." The CB&Q car immediately elicited passenger complaints about its odor and tattered upholstery..... SAN CLEMENTE wants to apply for a Federal grant to move the SAN DIEGANS' tracks off the scenic beach area near the Western White House..... MORE CREDIT cards will be honored by SP ticket offices effective May 1: Diners Club, Carte Blanche, Bankamericard plus Master Charge, American Express and Rail Travel. On April 1, SP starts honoring Rail Travel Cards in all diners. (But don't try putting them into the automat car slots on the SUNSET LIMITED)..... COAST STARLIGHT began using Santa Fe linen in diners March 22. The brand-new linen has little "Made in Ireland" stickers. SUNSET LTD also now has linen..... AMTRAK IS renumbering its fleet of cars. The 4-digit numbers are, briefly: 1000 series for baggage, 2000 for sleepers, 3000 for lounges, parlor & snack bar cars; coaches take numbers 4400 to 7200, first 2 digits indicating seating capacity of car; 8000 for diners, 9000 for dome and high-level equipment...

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE caught Richard Tower's eye on the COAST STARLIGHT the other day, so he duly reports: she's one of 5 assigned to Los Angeles, and travels to San Diego, Oakland, Chicago and New Orleans. Like most such reps, when she answered the anonymous employment ad she thought she was going to work as an airline hostess. Her favorite trains are the SUPER and SAN DIEGANS because "Santa Fe crews are the best and the cars the nicest." The Sunset Route she finds the most boring. Her job is to talk with passengers, determine areas of complaint, baby-sit, answer questions, and generally be friendly and helpful. Rich thought she did her job well..... NO SLUMBERCOACH is running on the SUPER CHIEF/EL CAPITAN, despite what it says in the timetable. And who got the cars all shifted around on the SUPER and why doesn't somebody right things? The diner is at the head of the sleeping cars, requiring a long walk for passengers..... PARLOR CAR service on the Chicago-Detroit run was reinstated Mar. 10 after many years. WOLVERINE & ST. CLAIR both carry an ex-New Haven "Bay" series sleeper-lounge with 6 bedrooms, reports Jack Ferry..... READER JACK Ferry also says he rode PANAMA LTD from Union Station just after consolidation of trains there, and observed that the backup movement is slow but goes smoothly. But he arrived in Homewood 22mins early and had to wait for time. He thinks 15mins could be

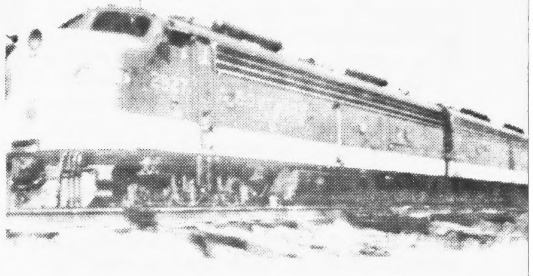
(continued on page 12)

East Coast Report

by Steve Farrar

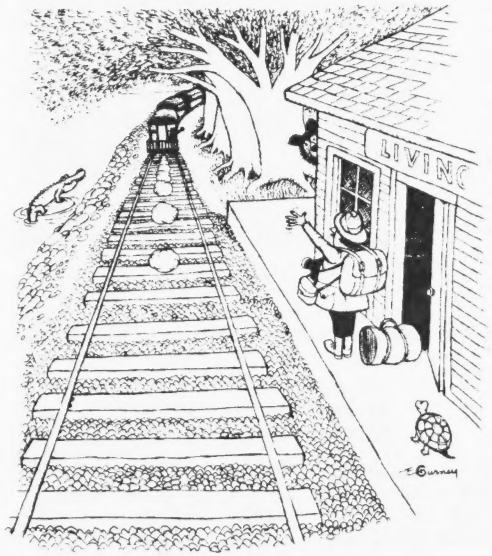
AMTRAK'S $9.90 FARE "FORMULA," used with some success between New York & Boston, will soon be applied to other routes as shown below:

Route	Present	Planned	Bus
Chicago to New York	$52.35	$35	$36.40
Chicago to Washington	43.35	35	33.95
Chicago to Detroit	16.25	9.90	12.70
Chicago to St. Louis	13.50	9.90	11.05
Chicago to Cincinnati	17.00	9.90	13.80
St. Louis to Kansas City	12.05	9.90	unknown



SOUTHERN RAILWAY'S President Graham Claytor tells us that "We are adding on the edge of the nose of each (green and gold E) unit the name SOUTHERN CRESCENT with a crescent moon 'C' in the style that was originally applied to the old CRESCENT LIMITED." It's been a long time since a locomotive displayed the name of its train. Keep up the good work, SR. The adjoining photo by our photographer John D. Ellis shows one of SR's E units freshly repainted in green and gold (the train name will come later).

HOSPITALITY WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT is the title of a 32-page book released March 13 by Southern Railway (see accompanying illustration from the book). The entire contents consists of excerpts from letters from satisfied passengers. There are 131 separate quotes, and the train generally referred to is obviously the SOUTHERN CRESCENT. Letters typically praise the dining service, cleanliness and courteous service of that train. Names of employees who have won award pins under SR's Operation Southern Hospitality are listed. One porter is pictured receiving the diamond pin from Pres. Claytor for receiving 20 significant written commendations from passengers. The book noted that favorable comments outweigh unfavorable by a margin of over 12 to 1, but did include a humorous letter from a dissatisfied Lynchburg patron: "Considering that there was an ad for a runaway slave in my coach and that the gas lights tended to flicker and that the spittoons needed cleaning, you did well. We only had one hotbox." Apparently the man rode one of the mixed trains. The actual letters may be seen on request in SR's file in Washington.



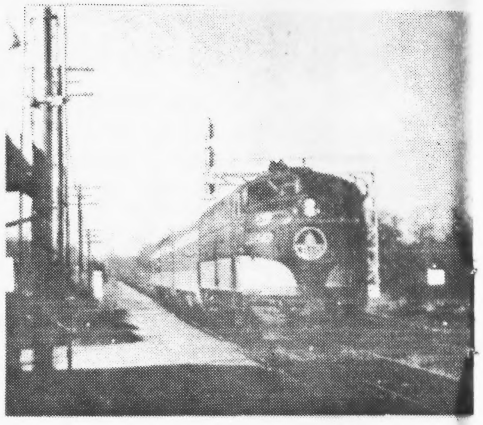
SPECIAL ALL-COACH TRAINS have been handling school class trips on Southern recently. An Atlanta-New York run was made north March 9 and south March 12 with about 22 cars including 3 diners. The second ran Birmingham-Washington March 15-18 with 15 cars and 2 diners. Each was powered by four green-&-gold E units.

More trains are planned, not to mention a full schedule of steam specials throughout the South beginning in April. Amtrak, however, has told NRHS chapters that it doesn't have the ability to run special trains, but that it has no objection to clubs running non-Amtrak excursions over Amtrak member lines.

4 NEW STATIONS are in Penn Central's 1972 engineering plans. The New Jersey DOT is paying for a new Trenton station. PC is to construct a new station in Altoona, and is to relocate in Pittsburgh--which is unfortunate because the present station is a bus and transit hub. PC is to build an Amtrak facility at Storrs to replace Cincinnati Union Terminal.

MISCELLANY: Newport News-Chicago service has been provided by the following types of coaches recently: GN dome, SP&S dome, N&W dome, UP leg-rest, C&O standard, SCL standard... SILVER STAR was 4hrs late northbound March 18 due to a freight derailment south of Petersburg. Train backed up about 50 miles to Norlina, N.C., in order to detour via Weldon, N.C.... CANADIAN NATIONAL now offers 10 to 30% off for groups of 15 or more adults traveling together... C&O depot, Charlottesville, will apparently be closed April 30, with Amtrak trains using the SR station...

Hi-level Santa Fe coaches are now running on the PANAMA LIMITED... During the recent strike by Canadian air traffic controllers, consists of Canadian National's overnighter between Montreal & Toronto swelled from 11 to 20 cars; RAPIDOS went from 12 to 18 cars...
Great Northern parlor observations are in Washington-Boston service on trains 170-177...



Four of the 5 ex-SP recreation cars on the FLORIDA SPECIAL have been painted in Amtrak's permanent color scheme by SCL's Hialeah shop, Miami. Sun Lounge sleepers on the FLORIDA SPECIAL now have new interiors. The lounge is ultra-modern, walls are bright orange. Upholstery in rooms is purple mixed with other colors... C&O E units have been taken from storage in Cumberland, Md., and are in use on the GEORGE WASHINGTON for the first time in about 2 years. B&O E's--and lately C&O Geeps--have been used. John Ellis' photo shown here pictures a B&O E unit on #98, the Newport News GEORGE WASHINGTON connection in February; rest of consist: B&O baggage, C&O coach, C&O office car. Seen at Lee Hall, Va. This is the train that, it is rumored, will be replaced by a bus...

COMMUTER NEWS: Long Island RR has published a Commuters Handbook, describing the history & operation of the line...
Metro. Boston Trans. Authority wants to buy outright all PC boston commuter lines...

FOR TRAINWATCHERS, here are some SCL schedules not available in public timetables:

South - read down					North - read up		
FLORIDA SPECIAL	SILVER METEOR	AUTO-TRAIN			SILVER METEOR	FLORIDA SPECIAL	AUTO-TRAIN
7:05p	9:50p	9:55p	Lv Richmond	Ar	3:15a	8:35a	9:35a
7:33p	10:21p	10:29p	By Petersburg	By	2:20a	7:50a	8:46a
9:00p	11:50p	11:59p	Lv Rocky Mount	Lv	12:50a	6:30a	7:14a
10:20p	1:15a	1:29a	By Fayetteville	By	11:19p	4:56a	5:39a
11:59p	2:50a	2:55a	Ar Florence	Lv	9:55p	3:35a	4:20a

RAIL TRAVELER'S DIARY

with: **Paul Rayton**

THE UNION / THE RED BIRD / and #66

Date: April 26, 1971

Some trains of the era I am chronicling operated with class--others, with crass. Train #66 was one of the latter.

No. 66 was a Penn Central effort, the last train between Chicago and Cincinnati via the old Pennsylvania Railroad line, thru Logansport and Richmond, Indiana.

The equipment for the run was one coach. And not even a snack bar coach at that. Also in the consist was a virtually empty baggage car. I shuddered inwardly as I boarded, half convinced that I should wait until the afternoon departure of the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY. At least it might have more than one car. What if our air conditioning broke down? Where would we go--the baggage car?

Inside the venerable ex-New York Central coach (with stainless steel exterior) the smell of fresh floor wax hung in the air, the windows were almost clean, and seats were covered with the new Penn Central nylon slipcovers, giving at least a clean appearance. "Thanks for riding Penn Central... Have a Pleasant Trip," advised the paper tab holding the paper headrest doily.

There were about 10 other people aboard as we left Chicago, promptly at 10:25am. Out from Union Station, out from the city, now out thru the familiar suburban neighborhoods seen so often from the windows of the BROADWAY. Englewood, then the lakeshore areas oppressed by the vast, smoky steel mills. Then we slowed and turned into new, unfamiliar territory, as we started southwards on the single track line toward Cincy.

It was a super spring day, and the fresh air out the vestibule doors was exhilarating. Small puddles of water dotted the landscape, little remnants of winter, the melted snow now warming pools for this year's crop of tadpoles.

As we rode along at a moderate rate, I was conscious of clickclicking over a large number of interlocking diamond track crossings--the many trunk lines fanning eastward from the heartlands of Chicago. Lots of crossings, but no trains did I see.

Southward we went, working our way quickly into the rural areas of Indiana. Small towns came and went, and at the stops of North Judson and Winamac we would stop to let off an elderly lady, or entrain a passenger going down the line a few stops.

Nowhere were we setting any speed records, I was noticing. As time passed, I began to feel the need of a snack--and I knew the single candy bar in my pocket would have to wait --it was far too early for that, my only sustenance during the 7hr, 40 min trip.

There had been no timetables anywhere. Only by bulky reference to my Official Guide of the Railways did I learn that we were just 10mins late upon our 2:10 arrival at Logansport, cryptically referred to in the Guide as the "Van Station."

It was here that the trip really began to get interesting. We slowed to a crawl, and then switched onto a transition track which appeared to be leading us to a crossing, east-west heading line. I thought we might be shifting directions at a major intersection point, but no, we only rolled about 30 yards on this track and then stopped, near a tiny, wood-frame edifice. It looked not unlike the box of a moving van truck. Could this be the "Van Station"? It could.

Doors opened and the train crew, without a word of explanation to the passengers, got off. Maybe we had a red block signal? I dutifully sat and waited as long as my curiosity could stand it--about one minute-- and then went forward to the open door to see what was transpiring.

Nobody around--nobody even in the engine. Gradually I got bolder and finally, deciding that the train wasn't about to abruptly pull out, went into the shoebox station and asked why we were stopped.

Of all the crazy things! We were waiting for the crew which would take us further on! It seemed that

the engine crew of the northbound train (#65 from Cincinnati, which had been due at 1:30pm) turned around immediately here and worked our train southbound. How soon would they be in? "The last we heard from them, they were about 10 miles out, so they should be in here in a few minutes," said an employee. About half an hour later they arrived, the crew transferred to #66, and we got started again, now 55 minutes behind schedule.

Signs posted inside the "station" had urged action to preserve Logansport's rail passenger service under Amtrak. It was too late to preserve the service here--it needed to be restored!

Boarding the train in Logansport had been one off-duty engineman. During the next two hours he told me more about the line on which we were riding. Much of the route was straight track, over predominantly flat land. I asked about our speed. "Well, when I first started working this division, this was one of the best, the fastest tracks around. With them ol' steamers we could really move along here! Right now, though, the official limit's only 50mph, and that's mostly a joke, too. In a couple of miles here we're coming to another slow board (slow order)--they're all over the place along here now--and some of 'em are really long. Down a bit further we've got a bad stretch that's 10 miles long. The track is so bad in all those places we can't go over 35. Sometimes in the engine even that feels too fast."

We slowed down, and I was more aware than I had been of the condition of the roadbed. With the soft springing of the passenger car--and our slow speed--it didn't feel too bad in the coach. I felt bad, tho, watching all manner of automobiles zip past us. How embarrassing. Certainly no way to win passengers from the autos.

"Yep, this line here is the pride and joy of the Penn Central. I don't think there is another stretch of track in the system that they've been able to ignore for twenty years--not do a thing to maintain it--and yet still be able to run trains over it!"

And so we went, drifting from 50 to 35mph, laboring back up to 50. One small boy asked his mother if we would be arriving on time. The mother, nonplussed, said, "We may. I hope so." We may not, I thought.

Outside the town of Elwood, Ind., we came to another unannounced stop. I heard the Engineer speaking on the Conductor's radio. He was stopping to check a particularly bad jolt they had felt while coming north today. His suspicions were confirmed--a broken rail. We literally inched across that one, with the Brakeman keeping a watchful eye. After duly reporting the break to the PC radio operator, we resumed our southward trek.

Outside of Richmond, Indiana, we came onto the old Pennsy main line, and track conditions got a little better. When we arrived in Richmond (5:50pm), we were still 55mins late. Remarkable under the circumstances. At least we hadn't become any later, and we had stayed on the tracks.

The rest of our trip to Cincinnati was unmarked by any other high drama. Dusk gradually fell and lights appeared in the surrounding countryside and inside the coach. I was quite aware that I was hungry. That mere candy bar had not answered that need.

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We slipped almost furtively into the Cincinnati Union Terminal about 7:40pm, having made up about 20mins of our lateness. I was glad it was dark outside, for it would have been hard to accept the sight of such a poor excuse for a train in the austere grandeur of Cincinnati's famous terminal.

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We called the National Safety Council in Chicago and inquired. Sure enough, our suspicions were confirmed. The slaughter on the roads had gotten worse again, but nobody, apparently, was about to publicize the gorey fact. After all, it wouldn't look good for the highway lobby, would it?—the highway lobby, that elusive but definitely existing amalgam of technological interests that pumps millions of dollars of brain-washing advertising money into the media yearly--or is it billions? The highway lobby—the fat cats who would be mightily embarrassed by unfavorable statistics just when elections are nearing and the breaking of the highway trust fund is a heated issue.

Just what are the statistics? The graphs on these pages are meant to clarify the depressing trends in motor vehicle crashes. The figures shown are for the years 1960 thru 1971. The 1971 total of 55,000 fatalities is still an estimate; the final tally won't be available until June. But the National Safety Council calculates that the figure is correct plus or minus 100. Thus it is quite certain that the final total will fall between 54,900 and 55,100. The final total for 1970 was 54,800.

Why was the drop of 1600 deaths in 1970 so important to the highway people? The answer is that the figure was the first straw they could clutch at in recent years to attempt to justify the expenditure of tens of billions of dollars on the controversial Interstate Highway program. Saving lives recently became the main feature of the freeway system. Earlier justifications, such as its use to citizens in escaping nuclear attack, quickly became absurd and were dropped. Negative aspects such as the environmental destruction that was not considered when the program was initiated, have become

thorns in the side of the road promoters, and not even the "advantage" of being able to drive non-stop from coast to coast retained its appeal. So the supposed safety issue has become the principal prop holding up the shaky structure of rationalization for the system.

If it could be shown that freeways were safer to drive upon than non-freeways, an important reason for continuance of the massive program would have been found. Other observers reasoned that the building and promotion of superhighways would have as a side-effect increased car ownership and increased usage of non-freeways as well. It's clearly impossible to do all one's driving on "safe" freeways, and the more one must rely on cars to get around, the relatively more driving on "unsafe" non-freeways must be done. So it was that the numerical drop in traffic deaths in 1970 was quickly and highly publicized--and so also was it that the failure of the death tally to decline further in 1971 was effectively concealed from the public.

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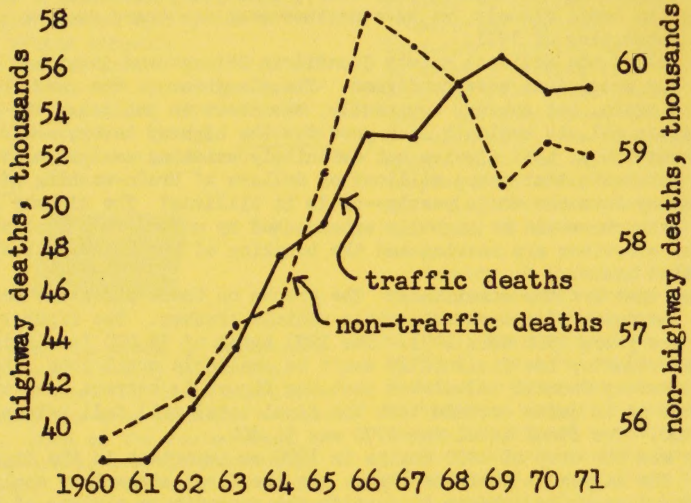
Grasping the auto crash decline of 1970 and shouting about it all out of context, the highwaymen have probably succeeded in misleading millions of Americans about the actualities of highway safety. But what context can the figures be placed in to give them proper perspective? Especially, it is important to know what meaning can be attached to the dip in fatalities in 1970 and to the subsequent increase in 1971. Do they automatically indicate that freeways are saving lives? This is the simple-minded conclusion the highwaymen have spent their—rather, your—money promoting. But is it true? Let us look at our first graph.



new perspective on traffic deaths

Our first graph shows that the number of highway deaths has been rising over the past dozen years. This is no news. The second line superimposed on the rate of increase of traffic deaths is the number of accidental deaths in the U.S. for the same period—those for all causes other than highway-related. Notice that these other deaths—from such causes as falls, burns, drownings, etc.—also increased up to a peak in the year 1966, and have been generally declining since then. In other words, as a nation we are becoming safer, less accident-prone, in all areas except in traffic.

Considering that there are a certain number of accident-prone people who will eventually have some sort of fatal accident, these people's actions must affect both highway fatalities and non-highway fatalities. No one can claim that they cause all accidents, but they certainly tend to involve other victims in their accidents, especially in the process of driving alongside other vehicles, as compared to falling or drowning. It is interesting to note, then, when one compares the two lines on our graph, that for the past four years there has been an exactly inverse, opposite, relationship between highway and non-highway deaths. Whenever one drops the other rises, and vice-versa. This suggests strongly two important conclusions:

1) The small variations in the highway death toll over the past several years are due to changes in the "popularity" of different modes of death by accident-prone individuals, and are unaffected by the state of highway construction.

2) Considering the apparent safety-consciousness of Americans since 1966 (as reflected in the trends of non-highway accidents), highways are becoming more dangerous than ever; the crash toll continues to mount, in spite of the overall greater safety of Americans.

the prop knocked out?

Can you dismiss our argument as just fanciful? On the other extreme, have we just knocked out the one remaining prop supporting the interstate highway program?

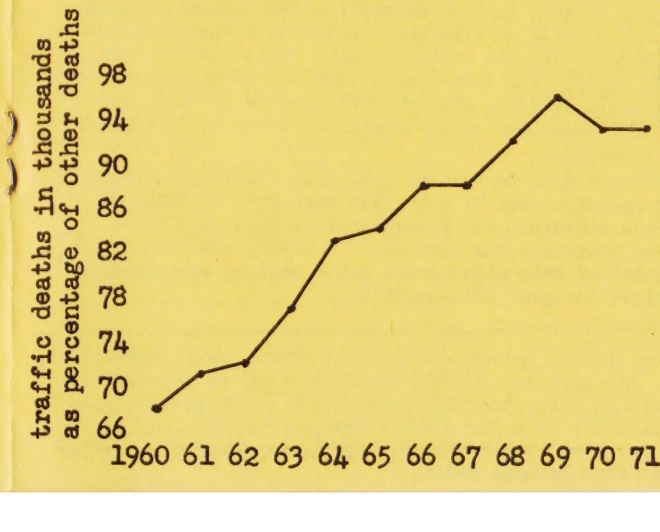
Of course you won't accept our argument on faith. It's only natural that you'll think hard about the trends of the figures we're showing you; after all, on these slim data, many bureaucrats and fat cats with vested interests in both Washington and Detroit have already jumped to conclusions that will intimately affect our lives for decades.

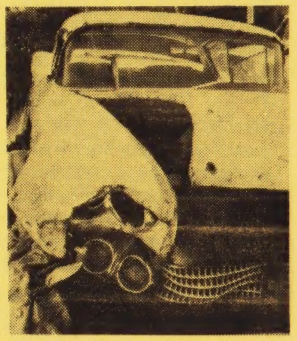
We don't expect you to take our argument on faith. And we certainly don't have the money to dress it up and present it to you in living color on network television or in double-spread slick magazine ads. But we do have the optimistic confidence that correct reasoning will win out in the long run in spite of the power of the highway lobby to persuade us that we really do want more and more cars and highways and less and less rail and fast transit.

We're not totally convinced ourselves that our idea about "accident-proneness" is accurate. But it does seem clear to us that some common factor is affecting both highway and non-highway accidental deaths and causing the two curves on our graph to follow each other—so we called that factor "accident-proneness" for want of more evidence. It is also clear that the two curves deviate from each other after the year 1966, with non-highway deaths steadily dropping and highway deaths continuing to rise. There is not a shred of evidence in the data to indicate that driving is becoming any safer, in spite of the massive freeway program underway since 1956.

traffic and non-traffic deaths

Now please examine our second graph. This shows traffic deaths in relation to non-traffic accidental deaths. Notice the steady climb over the years. In 1960 there were only 2/3 as many highway fatalities as there were other accidental deaths. In 1969 highway deaths had risen to 96%—almost neck-and-neck with all other causes combined. In 1970 the proportion dropped to 93%, and it failed to improve in 1971—it's still higher than any year before 1969. (Note that if this graph were to show traffic deaths as a proportion of all accidental deaths, including traffic, the curve would be almost precisely the same.) If one wishes to be optimistic about the leveling-off of the curve between 1970 and 1971, remember that the curve also leveled off between 1966 and 1967, but did not signal a halt to the inexorable upward movement. Motor vehicle crashes for many years have been accounting for an increasing number of American deaths, both on an absolute or percentage-wise basis.





playing the numbers game

What can be done about this terrible American tragedy? One often wonders if anyone is seriously and unbiassedly thinking about solutions. Most often one hears only about the big men with the vested interests playing the terrible numbers game of manipulating human lives with statistics aimed only at maintaining personal monetary profits.

If we are seriously to begin reducing the number of highway deaths, it seems clear that the only approach can be to stop building additional needless highways, to improve those existing dangerous roads and offer safer cars to the public, to orient our thinking towards increasing rail travel and transit, and to adopt a policy of reducing the number of vehicles now on the road.

In short, the achievement of a balanced transportation system should be a goal to be pursued with all possible haste. We had such a system not so many years ago, and it is possible to reinstate the balance now missing. And more than a return to the past, an even better transportation system could be achieved with technological advances we have made. Traveling and commuting was more fun a few decades ago, but we can improve upon the old problem of many slow, uncoordinated elements in the system that unduly complicated travel. Amtrak is an example of a new organization trying to coordinate many disjointed elements in our passenger rail system to revitalize travel by train. Amtrak should have much more money for a vastly expanded system of passenger trains comparable to those found in many foreign countries. Rapid transit systems for urban areas should be fully supported. The basis for all such improvements is an alteration in the Highway Trust Fund so that transportation money can be used according to need and not all channeled into highways. Policy toward the Trust Fund is the single most important issue in American transportation today, and will in a large way determine whether or not we will have a humanized system of transportation in future years, and most important, whether the dreadful slaughter of our fellow men on the highways will continue unabated.

SECRETARY VOLPE PROPOSES USE OF HIGHWAY FUNDS FOR MASS TRANSIT

A turning point in U.S. transportation may have been reached March 14 when Dept. of Transportation Secretary John A. Volpe proposed cutting back spending on the Interstate Highway system and using the funds instead for mass-transit systems in urban areas and for improving roads in rural areas.

The plan immediately evoked strong criticism from highway lobbyists, who wanted more highways planned after completion of the present Interstate system. It must eke its way past six committees before Congress can even consider it.

The plan deserves support, but in the opinion of some, does not go far enough towards establishing balance in U.S. transportation. Starting with $1 billion in mid-1973, funds would go from the Trust Fund to local authorities to use in various ways to improve urban transit. This amount would increase to $2.25 billion by 1975 and then remain stable. At the same time, highways would get first $3.25 billion, gradually reduced to $3 billion a year. Road construction for rural and small-town areas would be increased by $100 to $200 million annually.

The importance of Volpe's plan is that at long last the administration has recognized and acted upon the need to establish some sort of balance. The plan by itself will not solve all our transportation woes, and there will be bickering over the money amounts involved. However, with things as they are, even the enactment of this plan intact would have to be considered a major victory in the fight for good transportation.

AUTO DEATHS UP AGAIN! is a special 4-page supplement to Rail Travel Newsletter, issue of March 20, 1972. Any material in this supplement may be reproduced without permission. Credit to the source is appreciated. Additional copies of this supplement are available free for postage charges from the publisher, Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley, Calif. 94709. For large quantities, write for special rates. Photos from Message Media.

THE STEAMCAR'S LOWEST EBB?

by Richard Tower

Part II

Early the next morning I detrained at Seaboard Coast Line's attractive Savannah station and took a cab downtown to the Central of Georgia's depot, a brick building with iron grillwork as ancient as the SCL station was modern. NANCY HANKS II, the reason for the station's continued existence, stood ready on track one to receive passengers. A CNO&TP FP7 engine reminded all that Central of Georgia was now Southern Railway property, and the cars behind mixed CofG black with Southern stainless. Two coaches were followed by a diner-lounge boasting both counter and table service, then an ex-Wabash dome coach, fully carpeted and with leg-rest seats, and finally a chartered coach-lounge. After the 7am departure I walked to the diner for an abundant southern style breakfast. "You know you've crossed the Mason-Dixon Line," someone observed, "when you get grits without asking."

The NANCY journeyed into Mixed Train Daily country, and its passage thru Rocky Ford, Wadley, and Tennille brought forth images of flange stacks and steam chests, of tall ten wheelers and wooden combines now departed. We cut a narrow path thru the forests of Georgia, past little towns whose only concessions to the twentieth century were the ubiquitous red "Coke" signs hanging from crumbling brick storefronts. The old South gave way quickly to the new as the suburbs of Atlanta loomed up, and brick and wood yielded to the steel and concrete of takeout stands and supermarkets. The NANCY weaved thru yard trackage, then stopped abruptly on a spur next to the Southern headquarters building, for stately Terminal Station was suffering the ultimate ignominy of the wrecker's ball. I walked over, dodging piles of rubble, and stood next to the doomed building, trying to conceive of an alternative use--any use--that would justify this demolition.

Two blocks away Union Station still stood, but its commerce was sparse indeed. Tenants Atlantic Coast Line and Georgia Railroad had quit the premises, and Louisville and Nashville was struggling on with but one departure daily. L&N number 4, once upon a time the GEORGIAN, had been withering on the vine ever since its thru Chicago cars were discontinued in 1967. Now the train's solitary coach went to St. Louis, but even that fact was obscured by a timetable listing that suggested it went to Evansville only, where one would presumably change trains at 3:45am to reach St. Louis. Another secret well kept from L&N timetable readers was the presence of a snack bar on the train, but in fact an attendant stood ready to dispense coffee, stew, and sandwiches should the half dozen passengers departing Atlanta that afternoon become hungry.

Number 4 traveled over the old Western and Atlantic line thru Marietta, Big Shanty, Adairsville, and Dalton, the route of the Andrews raid. But Andrews and his men aboard the GENERAL could not have done a better job to impede our progress than the freight train ahead of us whose diesel quit. After a half-hour pause to permit the rescue of the ailing locomotive, we resumed our journey in the warm fall Georgia evening, across the Tennessee line into Chattanooga's ancient depot, then over the Tennessee River, thru Murfreesboro, and under the Nashville station's great arched train shed. There I detrained to await the departure of the northbound PAN-AMERICAN the next morning.

The PAN, with SOUTH WIND cars from Florida, was one hour late. When it finally showed, there were no apologies, no explanations. But if the Old Reliable had forgotten all else on how to treat the traveler, it had remembered his stomach, and an L&N Dixie Breakfast was worth the wait. Timekeeping did not improve, tho. A few minutes gained were lost when an air hose coupling failed, and highball as the hogger might up thru bluegrass country, it was not enough to make my C&O GEORGE WASHINGTON connection in Louisville. But L&N had some gentlemen as conductors, and I was allowed free passage up the Short Line to Cincinnati where the connection with the Ohio section of the GEORGE was made with perhaps a minute to spare.

Chessie, the C&O's choosy cat, was born in the days of Imperial

Salc . coaches and Standard Pullmans, and she was still around last fall to tout C&O's sleepers. But I wondered if Chessie would deign to ride the GEORGE WASHINGTON now. Today's GEORGE was faded and threadbare, and the passenger count was as sparse as the population in the West Virginia hills thru which it traveled. Complimentary meals for sleeping car passengers had been discontinued a few weeks before, and the food service from Cincinnati now was of the cheeseburger-in-cellophane variety.

Sleep came as we ascended the long, gentle slope into the Alleghenies Mountains. But it ended abruptly early the next morning at Charlottesville as the train was cut and blocked into Newport News and Washington sections in a series of high-speed switching moves so violent they would have driven Chessie up a tree. Then with an abbreviated six-car consist we crossed the Potomac and dipped under Capitol Hill into the lower levels of Washington Union Station.

I lingered upstairs an hour or so, watching the parade of limiteds and locals. Swift METROLINERS and majestic GG-1's all marched by, and all the while spunky Terminal Company Alcos darted in and out as the dwarf lights winked yellow and the interlocking sighed and clicked.

New York was reached that evening on the 6 o'clock METROLINER. A night time corridor ride is not long on scenery, but it made no difference, for all the excitement was inside. The METROLINERS have done more than return revenue passengers to the rails; they have returned a measure of the urgency and dispatch to train travel, ingredients missing too long. And most important, they are now taken seriously by the traveling public as a way of getting from here to there in safety and comfort. My Metroclub car was packed, in fact oversold, and the conductor cajoled and rearranged passengers in a most professional manner while the two attendants demonstrated ingenuity by doubling everyone's bar order on the safe assumption that the extra liquor would be consumed rather than returned. Dinner (Cornish hen or sirloin steak) was of the frozen airline tray variety but adequate, and found many takers. The phones ("Fastest in the East") and the bartenders (ditto) were busy the entire trip, and passengers' spirits remained high all the way into Penn Station.

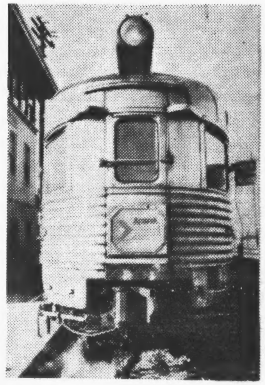
The following morning I bought a ticket to Montreal on the LAURENTIAN and found myself once again aboard a ubiquitous C&O Glamour Coach, this one an orphan of the Rio Grande as well. The single thru coach was handled to Albany-Rensselaer in Penn Central's drab Empire Service, but once in Delaware and Hudson's hands the journey became one of unmitigated pleasure. The consist had rare uniformity: the three cars were blue with yellow striping above the window line, and stainless steel fluting below. Doing the honors at the head, of course, was a proud Alco PA-1. Under volumes of black smoke from its 244 model V-16 we bridged the Mohawk and the Hudson, then skirted the shore of Lake Champlain for a hundred miles thru upstate New York. Lunch in the ex-Rio Grande PROSPECTOR diner-lounge was made particularly enjoyable by the presence of miniskirted waitresses, while outside, Adirondack and Green Mountain scenery was all one could ask for. D&H had held the line and provided the amenities, big and small, right to the end: free guidebooks, good food, daytime and overnight service, sleepers, lounges, refurbished cars, and the Alcos. It was too good to last much longer.

The final leg of the LAURENTIAN's journey was on the subsidiary Napierville Junction Railway north from Rouses Point across the Canadian border. After a short run thru Quebec farmland we crossed the St. Lawrence and entered fortress-like Windsor Station against the flow of Canadian Pacific's new bilevel commute fleet, outbound in the evening rush hour.

* * *

The LAURENTIAN is among the casualties now that May 1, 1971 has come and gone. Dead also are the NANCY HANKS, the CANNON BALL, the PAN-AMERICAN, and the POCAHONTAS. Dearborn and Fort Street won't stand much longer, and Chessie's just a memory. But for eleven days in the fall of 1970, they all performed a final time for me. So what if this was the steamcar's lowest ebb? It was still fun to be aboard.

AN EXCITING DAY AT OAKLAND



For Amtrak watchers it was clearly the most exciting event in the San Francisco area since last May 1 and the TURBO TRAIN arrival. Bright, brisk weather prevailed and railfans were out in force the morning of March 26 as the COAST STARLIGHT arrived at Oakland, Calif., from Seattle, bearing a round-end Seaboard Coast Line observation lounge. The car, newly shopped and carrying the new Amtrak number 3342 as well as a red-white-&-blue lighted Amtrak logo on the rear, had been placed on train 11-12 in Seattle the previous morning. SCL identifications had been removed, but the car was still in stainless steel with painted black top. Inside, new seat upholstery in green and blue was seen, and the car appeared clean, but there was no carpeting nor unusual decorative treatment.

As the train crawled into the station, 10mins late, two familiar SDP-45 engines in SP psychedelic grey were seen to be pulling a long string of cars, mixed Santa Fe and SP. The seven coaches were on the rear, ahead of the visually-interesting observation. It left Oakland 35mins late due to a snafu in busing passengers from San Francisco. About 300 travelers who had decisively opted for the fun mode of personal transportation were aboard as the train headed for the scenic coastal route. Riders reported that the car rode well, but the soft drink supply had been depleted and could not be restored at Oakland. The "Audubon" diner was short of waiters, so not all tables were used, and long lines developed at meal times.

Three sets of equipment are used on the STARLIGHT. If the normal sequence of use is maintained, the round-end car will leave L.A. northbound on Wednesdays and Seattle southbound on Saturdays. The other days a single SP "Pride of Texas" diner-lounge will serve the train's eating and lounging requirements. (The northbound train March 26 showed clearly the inadequacy of such a diner-lounge to meet the needs of the passenger load.)

THE BIG PENNSY MUSEUM AUCTION

Research Editor Richard Tower attended the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum auction in Philadelphia March 20-22. His report:

Imagine the south concourse of 30th St. Station, an area perhaps 30x150 feet with a side hall about half that size. Fill this space with thousands of books and photos, and tons of furniture and hardware, stashed in cartons, albums and envelopes, on the floor, on tables, hanging on the walls. Then open the doors to the nation's most rabid railfans, and you have some idea of the scene in Philadelphia.

The mementoes of almost 1½ centuries of railroading by the Pennsy and predecessor companies went on the block in a sale the likes of which may never be seen again. For 6 days before the auction, the material was on display. On March 20 all items were packed away and the auction began. The hundreds of chairs provided were not enough, and bidders lined the walls and stood far to the rear of the long concourse. At 10am, as the network TV cameras filmed away, the Samuel Freeman Co. auctioneer began calling bids.

Some 2000 lots were sold, about 70 per hour. Prices were often very high, and the casual collector was frequently disappointed. In general, to get bargains you had to buy in bulk. The careful bidder often did well; you couldn't go by the catalog descriptions without close examination. We bid on items of interest to the passenger train fan. We may let some of our purchases go shortly (watch these pages).

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cut from the schedule to return to traditional 4:30pm departure from Chicago..... PRAIRIE STATE's business has really fallen. Normal consist is now coach, dome coach, diner-lounge. Train seems to have lost student traval which might be regained by making a stop at Normal, Ill., besides its Bloomington stop. Train also suffers from lack of connections in St.Louis...

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TEXAS CHIEF, PANAMA LIMITED, and TWIN CITIES HIAWATHA will become all-reserved seat trains effective Apr. 30..... SPECIAL TRAIN Chicago-Champaign Mar. 17 & 18 (18 cars) for students attending Illinois State High School Basketball Tournament fell thru when Amtrak claimed shortage of cars..... NARP ATTORNEYS and representatives of Ralph Nader in mid-March called upon the Court and trustees overseeing Penn Central's reorganization to seriously consider nationalization of the road. As an alternative to that, they urged federal acquisition of PC tracks and rights of way, with private carriers operating the trains..... PASSENGER TRAIN Journal has to be our favorite extramural rail publication. Each quarterly arrival of the handsome, slick-paged magazine lifts our spirits and keeps us continuing to believe that passenger trains are really here to stay. The current (winter) issue, now in the mail, is no exception. Among many other things, check out the photos of Bill Anderson, one of the best train photographers around--and do notice RTN's ad on page 31 (PTJ is $4.50/year; 29 E. Broad St., Hopewell NJ 08525)..... FAST TRAINS for 13 "corridors", including Oakland-Sacramento, are proposed by Sen. Claiborne Pell, reports the NARP newsletter (March)...

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CANADIAN RAIL passenger supporters want to organize a NARP-like group north of our border, reports PTJ (winter issue). Contact Mr. Dave Scott, Box 261, St. Lambert, P.Q., Canada..... UPPER HARLEM Valley--including 9 stops--lost its PC commuter service. Last trains ran Mar. 13, after they were judged to be non-commuter. Citizens group, the Harlem Valley Transportation Ass'n, is vowing to continue to fight for train service..... UNOFFICIAL TELEPHONE survey in Los Angeles asked people what Amtrak is (in March); 4% knew, while a surprising 2 % connected it vaguely with trains. One reply: "military vehicle to transport troops over water"..... LATE NEWS: Pres. Nixon asked Congress Mar. 29 to pass the current Amtrak funding. (He also incidentally asked for $255 million additional for the Defense Dept. that had been earlier turned down. Cynics see the two as being tied together.).....

SEE THE April issue of Esquire magazine for travel editor's very favorable comments about Amtrak. He calls it our one best chance to alleviate highway and airport congestion and air pollution. Hurrah for him!..... ENGLAND'S APT--for Advanced Passenger Train--is in the news; pictured in latest Passenger Train Journal. Shows how far behind we are in rail technology.....

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RESPECTED FINANCIAL columnist Sylvia Porter did a 3-part series on Amtrak Mar. 22-24 (see QUOTES). Talked about Amtrak's problems, current activities and future plans in that order..... BERKELEY: CARS or People--title of the upcoming (Apr. 29) public conference and transit fair at the Veterans Bldg. 1931 Center St., in this town. Amtrak, BART, Southern Crossing, many other topics at the free meeting, plus tour of BART station. (It's free but write us for reservations, since it will fill up fast!)..... SANTA FE lunch counter diner is to shortly replace the SP hamburger grill cars on COAST DAYLIGHT..... RENO FUN TRAIN carried 760 passengers from Oakland March 17..... AMTRAK MAY be taking second look at UP equipment it passed over before. How about those dome diners?..... PENN CENTRAL wants to raise commute fares on the New Haven line 20% on April 21..... UNION PACIFIC, which for about 50 years has owned cabins, lodges, shops and other concessions at four Western national parks, will give them to the National Park Foundation next year... AMTRAK'S LATEST timetable eliminated many errors, but arrival and departure times of NATIONAL LTD in the Indianapolis Quick Ref. Schedule are still one hour early, reports reader Alan L. Buck. He describes service on the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY as "miserable".....

Urban-Suburban Transit

by Norman Freitag

When San Francisco Bay Area voters enter the voting booths in California's June 6 election, they will make a landmark decision profoundly influencing Bay Area transportation and land use systems for decades to come. The issue is a referendum on whether the "Southern Crossing" highway bridge should be built from Hunters Point in San Francisco to a point near Alameda on the Bay's eastern shoreline.

The outcome of Proposition A will significantly affect the success of the soon-to-operate Bay Area Rapid Transit system. The voting is likely to decide whether the Bay Area is to become another Los Angeles, or whether it can become the first major American urban area to adopt as basic policy that the demands of automobile dominance will no longer be accomodated. The combination of BART and local bus lines gives the area a unique opportunity to achieve an effective alternative to overdependence upon the automobile.

The bridge would cost at least $500 million and would carry cars, buses and trucks with no room for a rapid transit line. As a favorite project of California's highway lobby, the bridge was first proposed in the late 1940's.

During the 1960's the bridge was a controversial subject. But the bickering by state and local officials was over the number of bridges that should be built and where they should be located. Many local officials tried to get a bridge located as close as possible to their communities. In that bygone era, there was no real opposition to the question of whether more bridges were needed besides the existing five over San Francisco Bay.

In 1964, Robert B. Bradford, chief of the state highway program, declared, "We shouldn't be arguing about one more bridge. We should start building four more tomorrow."

With the rise of the environmental movement in 1969 and 1970, however, great popular disenchantment with the Southern Crossing developed. City governments at both ends of the crossing--San Francisco, Alameda, and San Leandro--came out in vehement opposition. A bill banning construction of the bridge was advanced by Assemblyman Robert W. Crown, and easily passed the State Legislature in 1971. Of the 26 state legislators from the 9 Bay Area counties, only one, Sen. Clark L. Bradley (R-San Jose), favored the bridge.

Despite overwhelming anti-bridge sentiment, Gov. Ronald Reagan vetoed Crown's bill. Since 1967, the Reagan Administration had continued the advocacy of the bridge which the administration of Democratic Governor Edmund G. Brown began in the early 1960's.

Reagan was now forced to agree to a referendum on the issue, something the proponents of the bridge had never intended. The Republican governor threw his support behind another bill by Assemblyman Crown which called for a decisive referendum on the issue. Thus the Bay Area's great transportation controversy of the 1970's is now before the people of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties.

The bridge's most damaging physical aspect is the freeway connections and approaches required. Much of the multi-lane approaches will be built on low-level causeways in the bay. The shorelines of Alameda, San Leandro, and southeastern S.F. will be effectively cut off from the bay and the vista across the water will be marred by freeways and the increase in smog & noise.

The Southern Crossing will fulfill its purported purpose of relieving congestion on the S.F.-Oakland Bay Bridge only thru tremendous cost to the Bay Area's environment and land use system.

The funds raised by bridge tolls and gas taxes that would pay for the crossing and its approaches should be used instead to expand the BART system. If Bay Area citizens patronize the BART system and other mass transit in large numbers, the congested Bay Bridge will be relieved of much auto traffic.

The question on the June 6 ballot will ask: "Shall the California Toll Bridge Authority be permitted to construct the Southern Crossing Bridge without further specific approval by the California Legislature?" A resounding "No" vote against the Southern Crossing will be an important step in creating a new era in transportation in America's urban areas.

NOW AMTRAK TRAINS SPEED YOU TO RIO VISTA JUNCTION

Sunday, April 16, the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association, in cooperation with **AMTRAK**, will operate the Fifth Annual excursion train to the California Railway Museum at Rio Vista Junction, California.

This year's **RIO VISTA JUNCTION LIMITED** originates in San Jose and follows a direct route, offering more time at the Museum and a more convenient departure time for San Francisco and Oakland passengers.

The Museum has more exhibits than ever before for you to see and ride, so join us for a pleasant outing by train!

INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

By Mail: Bay Area Electric Railroad Association, Inc.
3141 Franklin Street, Apartment 11
San Francisco, California 94123

In Person: AMTRAK ticket offices shown below will be happy to help you with tickets and reservations:

Oakland - Southern Pacific Depot, 16th & Wood Streets
Telephone 832-7455

San Francisco - AMTRAK Travel Center, Street Level
Transbay Transit Terminal
425 Mission Street - 398-4141

San Jose - Southern Pacific Depot, 65 Cahill Street
Telephone 297-4561

FARES

	Adults	Children Under 12
From San Jose	$15.95	$10.95
From San Francisco/ Oakland	$12.95	$ 7.95

Amtrak

We're making the trains worth traveling again.

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the opinion that an overall schedule of 7 hours between Washington and Parkersburg is possible by the TURBO and that a ride on the steam-powered CINCINNATIAN was a "heck of a ride" thru this mountainous territory.

John A. Mills
Little Rock, Ark.

I noted with interest the partial breakdown of Amtrak's numbering code in the last RTN. The following was taken from Amtrak's Consists Book, effective Nov. 14, and should help explain the car numbering code.

The code works differently for 2- and 3-digit train numbers. In the former, the first two digits of the car code number are the train number and the last two are car type designations, as Mr. Tower explained. When a car operates in more than one train, the number of the train which carries the car the farthest is adopted. Example: the 10-roomette/6-double bedroom car from Boston to Los Angeles; the car operates in train nos. Amtrak 171, Southern 1, and Amtrak 1. So the car is numbered 0150.

When a train has a 3-digit number, the first three are the train number and the last one the car type. Example: the dome parlor car 3026 on Amtrak 302. 302X is the train number and XXX6 is a parlor lounge car. A complete list of car type designations follows:

—00 thru —02	Parlor Club (with food service galley)
—03 thru —05	Parlor
—06	Parlor Lounge (incl. cars with observation feature)
—07	Dome Parlor (incl. cars with observation feature)
—08 thru —09	
—10 thru —19	Non Leg Rest Coach (60 or fewer seats)
—20 thru —29	(not used at this time)
—30 thru —39	Leg Rest Coach
—40 thru —46	Dome Leg Rest Coach
—47 thru —49	Dome Non Leg Rest Coach
—50 thru —59	10-roomette/6-double bedroom Sleeper
—60	Dome Sleeper - 8-roomette/4-double bedroom
—61 thru —64	(not used at this time)
—65	Dome Sleeper - 6-roomette/3-double bedroom
—66 thru —69	(not used at this time)
—70 thru —74	Sleeper, 11-double bedroom
—75 thru —79	Sleeper, 10-double bedroom
—80	6-double bedroom Sleeper-Lounge
—81	5-double bedroom Sleeper-Lounge
—82	(not used at this time)
—83	5-double bedroom Sleeper-Lounge-Observation
—84	1-master room/2-compartment Sleeper-Lounge (used on SR)
—85 thru —87	(not used at this time)
—88	Dome Sleeper-Lounge - 6-roomette/4-double bedroom
—89	Dome Sleeper-Observation - 4-double bedroom
—90 thru —92	Slumber Coach 24/8
—93 thru —95	Slumber Coach 16/10
—96 thru —99	Slumber Coach 16/4

Exceptions: the Metro Club cars carry only 3-digit line numbers because of computer limitations, so the first digit is omitted and the third number is the car type. Example: train 109, where the line number for a Metro Club car is 090.

This system does not always seem to be used in every case, since not all equipment has been moved to its assigned train and other cars are filling in. Example: last Dec. 11 I saw the TWIN CITY HIAWATHA train 9 carrying parlor car GM&O 2108 listed as 0907, which would make it a dome parlor car according to the above list. Also it seems the above list doesn't cover all the different types of cars that Amtrak bought.

Malcolm McKean
Springfield, Ill.